



Rhode Island Department of Health

Three Capitol Hill
Providence, RI 02908-5094

www.health.ri.gov

Frequently Asked Questions About the H1N1 Vaccination Clinic For Rhode Islanders Who Attend Out-of-State Colleges and Universities

Date: December 11, 2009

To: Rhode Islanders who attend out-of-state colleges and universities

From: Director of Health, David R. Gifford, MD, MPH

Re: Vaccination clinic

Question: When will Rhode Island residents who attend out-of-state colleges and universities receive H1N1 influenza vaccinations?

Answer: The Rhode Island Department of Health (HEALTH) in partnership with the Wellness Company, will run a clinic for Rhode Islanders who attend colleges and universities in other states. The clinic will be held sometime between December 21, 2009 and January 8, 2010, to coincide with most students' winter break.

Q: Where will the clinic be held?

A: The clinic will be held at a centrally located site in Rhode Island. Once details regarding exact clinic date and location are confirmed, they will be posted on the HEALTH website (www.health.ri.gov).

Q: Who is eligible to be vaccinated at this clinic?

A: Rhode Island residents through age 24 who attend out-of-state colleges and universities are eligible.

Q: Is pre-registration required for the clinic?

A: Yes. Students were required to pre-register in order for HEALTH to plan for the required amount of vaccine and staff to run a clinic. Walk-ins will be turned away.

Q: How do I pre-register?

A: An online enrollment system was available on HEALTH's website (www.health.ri.gov). Pre-registration opened December 3 and closed at 4:00 p.m. December 11.

Q: Can young adults who are not enrolled in college be vaccinated at this clinic?

A: No. Due to vaccine availability, only Rhode Island residents who attend out-of-state colleges will be eligible for vaccination at this clinic. The goal is to ensure that all college and university students have had the opportunity to be vaccinated before they travel back to schools and their congregate living situations.

Q: Why aren't students older than 24 being vaccinated at this clinic?

A: To date, the highest number of cases of H1N1 flu have been confirmed among people 5 through 24 years old. Unlike seasonal flu, H1N1 flu appears to infect younger people at a higher rate than older people, who may have some existing immunity from previous infections and vaccinations.

Q: Is the H1N1 vaccine safe?

A: Yes. The H1N1 vaccine is just as safe as the seasonal flu vaccine, which millions of people safely receive every year. This vaccine is made using the same processes and facilities that are used to make the currently licensed seasonal flu vaccines.

Q: Will consent forms be required for young adults receiving vaccinations at this clinic?

A: Yes. Everyone receiving the vaccine will be required to return a consent form. Anyone younger than 18 will need to have a consent form signed by a parent or guardian. All students must bring their signed and dated consent forms, as well as a valid student I.D., with them to the clinic.

Q: How will students obtain consent forms and details about the clinic?

A: Consent forms are available to download from the HEALTH website (www.health.ri.gov).

Q: On the consent form, I answered “yes” to one of the questions about allergies, previous flu vaccinations and existing medical conditions. Can I be vaccinated at the clinic?

A: If you answered “yes” to any of the questions, about allergies, previous flu vaccinations and existing medical conditions you cannot receive the nasal-spray vaccine that will be given at the clinic. You may be eligible to receive the injectable vaccine in another setting. Talk to your doctor about this.

Q: What type of vaccine will be used at this clinic?

A: All healthy students will receive the Flumist nasal-spray vaccine at the clinic. Anyone with an egg allergy or underlying health condition such as asthma may not be eligible to receive Flumist and should contact their healthcare provider. A small amount of injectable vaccine may be available for those who are not able to receive the intranasal vaccine.

Q: If someone has already had the flu, do they need the H1N1 vaccine?

A: Yes. Many of the people who had influenza-like illnesses this year (fever plus a cough or fever plus a sore throat) did not have H1N1 but may have had other viruses. Viruses are also unpredictable and may change. Therefore, HEALTH recommends that everyone get the vaccine, even if they had or thought they had H1N1 already.

Q: Can someone receive the H1N1 vaccine if they are sick with a fever?

A: Yes. However, clinic staff will not vaccinate anyone with a fever of greater than 100.4° Fahrenheit or 38° Celcius.

Q: Where can I find up-to-date information about the clinic for Rhode Island residents who attend out-of-state colleges and universities?

A: For additional information and questions, visit www.health.ri.gov or contact HEALTH’s H1N1 Information Line at (401) 222-8022.